

The Washington Times' [lead editorial](#) this morning lays out exactly how and why the so-called 'Fairness Doctrine' is really just censorship. It notes Congressman Pence's [work](#) on the front lines to "scuttle the Fairness Doctrine once and for all."

*For the better part of four decades, "fairness" meant that federal authorities would monitor the airwaves for perceived political bias, imposing their own notion of "equal" time and access for other viewpoints. The most important effect of this trampling on the First Amendment was self-censorship, as broadcasters hedged their programming. The result was blander, more stifled and less free coverage. The practice was mercifully ended in 1987 when President Reagan's Federal Communications Commission voted to dismantle its own monitoring operations.*

*To put the matter to rest once and for all, the Broadcaster Freedom Act, courtesy of Rep. Mike Pence, Indiana Republican and a former radio host himself, was introduced last June to formally prohibit the FCC from ever repromulgating the doctrine. It has languished in committee. At present, a [discharge petition](#) to bring a vote has garnered 195 signatures. Two-hundred eighteen are needed. Of the 309 House members who approved the one-year moratorium attached to the financial-services bill, [approximately 100](#) have not signed the petition. Unsurprisingly, they fall along partisan lines.*